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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/754,321

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Alfred W. Mak

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06/16/2006

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EXAMINER

DEO, DUY VU NGUYEN

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1765

DATE MAILED: 06/16/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/754,321

Applicant(s)

MAK ET AL.

Examiner

DuyVu n. Deo

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1765

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 April 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 and 25 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18, 25 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

2. Claims 1, 10-18, 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) or (e) as being anticipated by admitted prior art.

The rejection is either 102 (b) or (e) because it is unclear when the prior art described in pages 1-5 of the specification was known and published at the time of the invention was filed.

Admitted prior art describes a method for controlling the critical dimensions of a photomask substrate comprising: providing a photomask substrate with a metal layer on top; performing a photolithographic process on the substrate (this would a printed pattern on the photomask); measuring pre-etch critical dimensions of the respective elements of the etch photomasks (of the substrate of the previous batch) and adjusting or modifying the etch process (claimed etch recipe or initial etch recipe) for the substrate based on the pre-etch critical dimension data and then performing etch process on the substrate based on the modified etch recipe (paragraphs [0004,0006]) (this would form an etched pattern on the substrate).

Referring to claims 10, 15, the step for forming the phase shift angle of a phase shift photomask including etching the substrate, the light-shielding metal layer using a resist and

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etching the translucent metal layer is also described in paragraph [0004] of the specification.

Prior art teaches of measuring the phase shift angle and its uniformity across the substrate and determining if the measurement passes the requirement (this would also include marking the photomask out of the specification when the measurement are out of specification, claims 11, 16) (paragraph [0007]).

Referring to claims 12-14, 17, 18, the materials for each type of photomask are known to one skilled in the art as shown in paragraph [0003] of the specification.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 2-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over admitted prior art.

Referring to claim 2, measuring the post-etch critical dimensions and modifying the initial etch recipe for the next photomask substrate would be obvious to one skilled in the art because that would provide a correct etch recipe right away for the next substrate; otherwise, many defect photomask would be formed if the error is not detected or corrected after each substrate is etched.

Referring to claim 3, the performing rework of the photomask substrate when the critical dimension are out of specification would be obvious in order to provide a quality photomask

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substrate. It is a quality control process that would have to be done with any type of manufacturing of a device.

Referring to claims 4-9, the materials for each type of photomask are known to one skilled in the art as shown in paragraph [0003] of the specification.

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments filed 4/7/06 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant's argument (rejection of claims 1, 10-18, 25) that admitted prior art refers to statistically processing the results of such measurements and therefore, there's no suggesting or teaching of measuring my an integrated measuring tool is found unpersuasive because those measurements from the admitted prior art must be acquired through some integrated measuring tool. Otherwise, there would be no data for the statically processing to correct the etch recipe.

Applicant's argument (referring to claims 2-9) that admitted prior art describes the process is done on batch-to-batch is acknowledged. However, at the time of the invention, it is obvious to any skilled in the art that many defected wafers would be produced if waiting to correct the error after the process finishes the batch. Even if the process would have to slow down for the analyzing of the data, producing a quality wafers would out weight producing many defected wafers. For this reason, one skilled in the art would find it obvious to analyzing data to look for error after each wafer is done. Furthermore, the claim doesn't specify that the wafer be within a batch. It can be from the next batch.

Election/Restrictions

6. Applicant's election of the method claims and canceling the non-elected claims in the reply filed on 4/7/06 is acknowledged. Because applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP § 818.03(a)).

Conclusion

7. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to DuyVu n. Deo whose telephone number is 571-272-1462. The examiner can normally be reached on 6 am -2:30 pm.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nadine Norton can be reached on 571-272-1465. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Primary Examiner

Duy-Vu N Deo

6/13/06

